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ABSTRACT

A survey, designed to assess the impact of career education on the communication disciplines, was conducted in 474 junior and senior colleges and universities in thirteen states. The survey questionnaire contained 66 questions probing the various aspects of career education, from attitudinal perceptions to practices, including fields into which communication department graduates may have entered. Survey findings generally indicated that communication departments provide few career oriented program alternatives. It is concluded that departments should integrate career compentencies into their curricula, develop adequate internal advising procedures, and utilize a variety of internship programs. (TS)

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IMPACT SURVEY OF CAREER EDUCATION ON COMMUNICATION CURRICULUM WITHIN THE 13 STATE REGION OF THE CSSA

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Today the most important evaluative norm for educational programs is accountability; one of the most influential dimensions is that of career education. Career education appears to be an after shock of the campus disturbances of the sixties, emerging from a general disillusionment and skepticism about the value of education. It demands that an institution examine and evaluate its curriculum and the relevance of that curriculum to the development of viable career perspectives and opportunities. In some sectors, no doubt, career education is the panecea--the solution to economic and social difficulties; on the other hand, career education can provide a useful impetus toward the development of curriculum programs which will offer students respectable alternatives during their academic years.

A review of communication career education literature indicates that the relationship of career education and communication curriculum has not been thoroughly explored.[1] Career education,

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[1]See: Nadeau, Ray. Speech-Communication: A Career-Education Approach. Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1974; Kennicott, Patrick and Schuelke, L. David (eds.) Career Communication: Directions for the Seventies. New York, SCA, 1972; Hopper, Robert and Williams, Frederick, "Speech Characteristics and Employability," Speech Monographs, 40, November 1973, pp. 296-302; Taylor, K. Phillip and Buchanan, Raymond W., "Vocational Marketability of Communication Competencies," Southern Speech Communication Journal, 38 (Spring 1973), pp. 285-291; Piersol, Darrell T., "Non-Academic Career for Speech Communication Majors," Bulletin of ADASC, October 1972, pp. 3-6; Weiss, Robert O., "College Debate and Vocational Choice," JAFA, Spring 1973, pp. 466-468.

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for the most part, remains undefined. One of the generally accepted definitions of career education is that it is not the same as vocational education, but instead deals with the development of each person's ability to make informed choices about one's own career.[2] Another goal is the need for development of curriculum instruction which pertains to career awareness, career orientation, and career explorations.[3] Related to this latter goal is the apparent need for more sophisticated research in speech communication in the following three areas: (1) a need to identify and define those competencies within communication which are directly job-related and distinct from the general communication skills that are desirable for everyone; (2) a need to explore the relationship between inter- and intra-personal communication skills and career decision-making, particularly as they relate to the career counseling process; and (3) a need to identify those career areas into which communication majors might enter, and to inform the schools and universities of these options.[4]

In 1972, the Speech Communication Association sponsored a summer conference centered around the theme of career communication

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[2]Witkin, Belle Ruth, "SCA and Career Communication: A Status Report," Paper presented to the Speech Communication Association Convention, November 11, 1973, New York, p. 2.

[3]See Lieb-Brilhart, Barbara, "A Course in Career Communication for Junior High School," Curriculum guide published through the Nebraska State Department of Education, 1973.

[4]Clarify: SCA Prospectus for Research Grant submitted to the NIE, entitled "Development of a Career Placement Model Based upon Speech Communication Competencies," Barbara Lieb-Brilhart, Principal Investigator (1974).

education.[5] A number of general goals and objectives were described. However, there remains the question of what, if any, impact career education discussions have had on communication curriculum, particularly within the 13 state region of the Central State Speech Association.

With the teaching ranks bulging at the seams, one might expect some futuristic perceptions and optional programs to evolve which would make speech communication majors or graduates marketable individuals in business, industry, government, social work, or any number of other fields. It is unquestionably the responsibility of the speech communication profession to develop clear and useful curriculum competencies which would prepare the speech communication undergraduate major or graduate student as a marketable individual in other than just the educational arena.

However, in little less than two years since the Summer 1972 SCA Conference, it was expected that the survey would essentially reflect an uncommitted attitude toward career communication education and any consideration of optional careers other than education or graduate education per se.

PROCEDURES

A survey was designed to assess the impact of career education on the communication discipline; chosen as the area for the intensive survey were the 13 states of the Central State Speech Association. Within this region, there were identified 474 junior and senior colleges and universities.

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[5]Kennicott, Ibid.

The survey questionnaire was constructed on both sides of a single sheet, approximately six pages in length. Judges were initially asked to assess the wording of the questionnaire, and to clarify hazy questions or statements. The questionnaire contained 66 questions probing the various aspects of career education, from attitudinal perceptions to practices including fields into which departmental graduate may have entered.

The questionnaire was addressed to the chairmen of the departments of speech at each of the colleges and universities in the 13 state region listed in the 1972-1973 SCA Directory.[6] A stamped addressed envelope was provided for easy and convenient return of the questionnaire.

Three weeks following the initial mailing, a second letter was send to each of the chairmen again to remind them of the initial questionnaire and to seek their immediate response and support for this project. Of the 474 institutions, 238 returned the questionnaire, an overall return average of 50.2%. Of these, 236, 49.8%, were usable.

RESULTS

Of those responses received, 70.3% were filled out by department chairmen, 14.4% by Directors of the Basic Speech course, and 12.3% by other faculty members in the department. 122 schools (51.7%) were classified as either private or church-related

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[6]The 1973-1974 SCA Directory had been delayed in publication, thus making the 1972-1973 the only usable Directory published by SCA for this study in April, 1974.

institutions. The rest were public. 187 four-year institutions comprised 79.2% of the total responses received, or over fifty percent of the four-year institutions in the defined 13 state region. 48 (20.3%) were two-year colleges. 129 schools (54.6%) had total enrollments of 2000 or less; 35 schools (14.9%) had enrollments exceeding 10,000 students. All 13 states were represented in the responses received as shown in Table 1.

(insert Table 1)

Of those responding, 179 schools (75.9%) had 150 or less students majoring in Speech Communication; 74.6% had no masters programs and 93.6% had no existing doctoral programs.

222 schools (94.1%) indicated they had a basic speech course offered. "Basic" was defined as that "basic, introductory, or fundamental course which is universally required or recommended to freshmen or lower classmen or which is readily identified by administration as a useful college-wide course." Nearly fifty percent of the respondees indicated that the course was required by the college as a whole, by some specific internal colleges (e.g., Teachers College), or by various majors. 156 schools (66.1%) had enrollments up to 500 students per year in the basic speech course. Within the basic speech course, only 66 schools (28.0%)

(insert Table 2)

indicated they had any instruction in "career education." Such class work was spread from one to three hours by 16.4% of the respondees. 13.6% indicated that individualized instruction in

career education was also available.

Although no details were provided, 129 schools (54.7%) indicated they have considered a career advising program; but only 79 schools (33.5%) indicated they did any career counseling whatsoever within their departments. Those having career counseling procedures utilized the following kinds of resources: 35.2% used on-campus resources; 19.5% used off-campus resources; 23.3% said they utilized journal articles;[11] 17.8% utilized books; 15.7% used government documents; and 9.7% used various other resources including films, videotape, and off-campus visits.

In response to the question about the kinds of career competencies identified in their curriculum, 106 schools (44.9%) said they have none specified, 58 schools (24.6%) said there were specified courses but implicit competencies in their curriculum, and 18 schools (7.6%) indicated they had specified competencies. However, this latter group frequently listed courses rather than specific competencies, thus confusing the responses provided by the group.

Of those programs responding to this questionnaire, only 87 schools (36.9%) had any kind of internship program for students to work cooperatively with community agencies and companies. Of those with career advising programs, only 39 (16.5%) had internship programs.

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[11]The most commonly referenced journal article is Piersol's "Non-Academic Career for Speech Communication Majors" in the Bulletin of ADASC, October, 1972 (SCA).

This survey assumed that an impact by career education upon communication curriculum might be reflected in the way the communication discipline relates to other college majors; 178 schools (75.4%) indicated they encourage their students to take classwork in related fields as shown in Table 3.

(insert Table 3)

Schools were also requested to provide some sort of estimate of the number of their undergraduates and/or graduates who enter various career areas. 157 schools (66.5%) indicated they had 25 or less undergraduate majors graduating each year. Of that figure 55.5% said they had 50 or less enter business. 33.4% said they had fifty or less students enter government; 36.5% said they had 50 or less students enter industry. 62.7% said they had 50 or less students entering education and 57.6% had 50 or less students going on to graduate work. Of those schools having masters degree programs, the largest number (16.5%) indicated they had 50 or less students entering education, with 14% indicating

(insert Table 4)

they had graduates entering business. Those universities with doctoral programs seemed to indicate an even representation of the number of doctoral students entering any one of the above specified career areas.

When asked how they felt about career education 60.2% responded with "favorable feelings" toward the movement, and only 4.2% in-

dicated any negative perspectives.

155 schools (65.7%) indicated that the 1972 Summer Conference Proceedings on career communication had not been read; 62.3% did not have copies of the SCA brochure entitled "Careers in Speech Communication" in their departmental office.

(insert Table 5)

The survey questionnaire also requested the respondees to list those career areas into which their graduates are known to have entered. Table 6 provides a rather extensive listing of nearly 85 career fields representing responses on behalf of 46% of the respondees.

(insert Table 6)

DISCUSSION

It is readily apparent that career education, though generally favorably perceived, has not been integrated actively into communication curriculums. This no doubt will be resolved in the future in light of potential societal changes. Piersol has felt that the universities will have to change and compete more for their customers, developing "courses based on a careful analysis of what students need to know in their chosen careers rather than just what the faculty is inclined toward and qualified to teach."[12]

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[12] Stanford P. Gwin, "The Responsibilities of Speech Communication Departments in Higher Education," Bulletin of ADASC, Issue 6, January, 1974.

The expected results of this survey were basically confirmed; however, there are several specific conclusions and comments which can be drawn from the data received.

1. In light of the fact that career education remains basically undefined, a more active program of integrating instructional materials into the curriculum which will assist the student in developing career alternatives should be exerted. With the large population of students passing through the basic speech course, this course should be developed in such a way as to include materials on career communication education.

2. Directly related to the first conclusion is the fact that career competencies have not been identified; although research endeavors may assist in the future, it would be wiser if departments began to develop their own means of assessing needs and structuring experiences related to those needs. Competencies will be identified ultimately; however, it appears that there is a basic misunderstanding as to what competencies really are. Courses are the most common method of "delineating" competencies; however, simply by having taken a course does not mean that a person has acquired a set of desired behaviors.

3. Advising programs and procedures appear for the most part to be an "informal" aspect of speech departments. It would appear that departmental chairmen should seriously review their advising procedures, establish some sets of standards, place one individual in charge of the processes, and actively integrate career counseling. A distinction which may become a serious

division among members of the field in days to come needs to be mentioned. Advising is basically a process of insuring that a student is properly registered for the forthcoming academic semester and/or year. Counseling assumes that the counselor spends some time with the counselee, over a period of time during that student's academic career, sharing perceptions related not only to academic levels of performance, but also to possible career interests. When speaking of a career counseling program, it is assumed that this involves a dynamic, aggressive, and spirited staff willing to work with the student in realizing his or her needs and/or interests. Once competencies have been identified, career counseling procedures will become most effective relating student interests, counseling objectives, and career options.

4. Materials need to be developed which discuss some of the career options available to students. It is obvious that the SCA Careers brochure is lacking in its perspectives; while conducting this survey, materials were brought to the attention of this author which have merit, but which are oriented for specific institutions. Table 6 also indicates the breadth of the fields into which communication graduates have entered which are not adequately covered in the SCA brochure. But having more adequately developed materials will contribute significantly to the counseling processes of any department with regard to career opportunities.

5. As indicated in the results, only 16.5% of those indicating they had an advising procedure have students engaged in internship or cooperative educational experiences. These programs should be examined more closely for inclusion in communication programs; the value is seen in providing the student with relevant experiences which go well beyond the boundaries of the classroom walls. Some of these experiences may include internships in related areas such as the following: ministry, social work, public relations, law offices, employment counseling, advertising, TV/radio announcing, management, or many other possibilities.

6. In light of the questionnaire responses, it is necessary for department chairmen to keep track of the careers into which their graduates enter. The numbers provided of those entering business, industry or government were for the most part estimates. One institution responding submitted a detailed listing of its graduates (excluding names), degrees, dates, and the position currently held by that graduate. This is useful information, not only for recruiting students into a department, but also for curriculum planning and development. It is obvious that the education field will not always be able to handle the large number of students passing through institutional programs; career options are a necessity, and potential for developing them in communication is boundless.

7. One of the most significant findings in this survey was that 68 schools (28.8%) are currently undergoing what would appear to be major department curriculum revisions. 119 schools (50.5%) have undergone similar revisions within the past three years. If this is the case, it would not be that difficult to integrate into the curriculum objectives and competencies related to career communication education within the CSSA region.

For the most part, the survey reveals a discouraging lack of awareness of the importance of career education to the curriculum.

With several possibilities already suggested, the communication field needs to explore responses to this challenge more adequately. Education must respond to the direct needs and concerns of the students if education is to remain a viable alternative to careers in business, industry, or government.

Table 1*

States	Total Colleges	Number Received	Percent Received	Senior Colleges	Number Sr Received	Junior Colleges	Number Jr Received
Illinois	85	45	51.8	51	27	34	17
Indiana	35	20	57.1	35	20	--	--
Iowa	36	17	47.2	23	12	13	5
Kansas	33	15	45.5	23	9	10	6
Michigan	52	22	42.3	35	17	17	5
Minnesota	34	18	52.9	23	14	11	4
Missouri	42	20	47.6	31	19	11	1
Nebraska	20	8	40.0	14	6	6	2
North Dakota	8	4	50.0	7	3	1	1
Ohio	54	24	44.4	51	22	3	2
Oklahoma	29	15	51.7	18	13	11	2
South Dakota	13	9	69.2	13	9	--	--
Wisconsin	33	20	60.6	33	17	--	3**
	n=474	net n=236 (Total n=238 or 50.2%	49.8		(n=187)***		(n=48)*** 20.3%

*Sources and categories for all above listed colleges and universities taken from the 1972-1973 SCA Directory, as of May 1974. The 1973-1974 SCA Directory had not been published at the time of this study.

**Not classified as "junior" colleges in the 1972-1973 SCA Directory.

***Of the total responses, 180 4-year colleges equals 78.9 % of the responses and 47 2-year colleges equals 20.6% of the total responses, received. The figures on the chart represent the percentage of the total number possible in each category.

Table 2

States	Number of Schools Offering Basic Speech Course	Number of Schools Responding	Number of Schools in the State
Illinois	38	45	85
Indiana	17	20	35
Iowa	17	17	36
Kansas	15	15	33
Michigan	22	22	52
Minnesota	18	18	34
Missouri	19	20	42
Nebraska	8	8	20
North Dakota	4	4	8
Ohio	23	24	54
Oklahoma	15	15	29
South Dakota	9	9	13
Wisconsin	18	20	33

Table 3

Related Areas of Academic Study

In what field(s) do you encourage your students to take related courses (not research tool areas) for undergraduate/graduate studies?

Field	Percent Response
Personnel - Management	36.4%(86 schools)
Psychology - Sociology	72% (170 schools)
Mass Media	68.2%(161 schools)
English	67.8%(160 schools)
Linguistics	32.2%(76 schools)
Education	41.1%(97 schools)
Science	11.4%(27 schools)
Mathematics - Statistics	23.7%(56 schools)
History - Political Science	51.7%(122 schools)
Other Areas: Art Theatre Anthropology	14.4%(34 schools)

Table 4

Percentage of schools indicating 50 or less enter these fields upon graduation

Level of Degree obtained by Graduates	Business Related Careers	Government Related Careers	Industry Related Careers	Education	Other Career Areas	Enter Graduate School
Undergraduate	131*	79*	86*	148		136**
M. A. Degrees	33	27	27	39	5	
Ph. D. Degrees	8	9	9	9	230 no responses received for this block	

*50 or under

**57.6% of those with undergraduate majors enter graduate schools.

Table 5

Questionnaire	Have you read "Career Communication: Directions for the Seventies" published through the SCA National office?	
	Yes	No
Department Chairman	59	104
Director, Basic Course	8	25
Faculty Member	4	22
Other (e.g. Dir. Undergraduate Studies, Dir. Grad. Studies	3	3

Table 6

CAREERS WHICH SPEECH-COMMUNICATION GRADUATES HAVE ENTERED

Public Relations and Advertising
- Medical Communication
- County Health Department
- Owner, Advertising Agency
- University Relations
- Public Relations for any agency
- Promotions
- Army Information Officer
- Technical Editor, National Assoc.

Personnel
- Personnel Relations
- Personnel Training
- Personnel Management
- Office Manager
- Secretary

Business
- Motel Manager
- Management Trainee
- Commercial Store Manager
- Department Store Buyer
- Market Research
- Department Store Trainer
- Computer Programming (Data Processing)
- Theatre Manager
- Travel Agency Counselor
- Telephone Company Repair Services
- Consumer Research Projects
- Organizational Communication Consultant
- Banking
- Accounting

Industry
- Industrial Management
- Union

Government
- Congressional Administrative Assistnat
- City Planning Secretary
- Elected Official
- State Government
- Postal Inspector
- U. S. Armed Services
- Air Marshall
- City Government (environmental control)
- Internal Revenue Service
- Port Authority
- Peace Corps

Table 6 (continued)

Law Enforcement
- Police and/or Security Officer
- Probation Officer
- Lawyer

Entertainment
- Movie Theatre Operator
- Professional Sports
- Acting, Professional Theatre Company
- Community Theatre

Homemaker

Social Services
- Nursing Home Administrator
- Social Service Agency (e.g. March of Dimes)
- Health Services Agencies
- Youth Organizations
- Recreation (including drama director)
- Air Line Hostess
- Library Work
- Speech and Hearing Clinic
- Counseling

Sales
- Insurance and Insurance Adjuster
- Stocks and Bonds
- Distribution
- Real Estate Broker
- Sales Supervision
- Automobile Sales

Ministry
- Seminary
- Church-related Vocations
- Church Youth Work

Vocational Careers
- Bricklayer
- Farmer

Education
- Administrator
- Teacher (all levels)
- Coordinator, Veterans Affairs, Community College
- Community College Teacher
- University Professor

Table 6 (continued)

Media

- Television and Radio Broadcasting
- Writing (Copy Writer)
- Radio Station Manager
- CAble Television
- Newspaper Reporting
- Educational Television
- Announcing
- Speech Writer (political figure and/or association)

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